

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AMCONSUL HONG KONG

UNCLAS STATE 087152

FOL REPEAT BANGKOK 8260 ACTION SECSTATE INFO MANILA TAIPEI
TOKYO HONOLULU DTD 18 APR.

QUOTE

UNCLAS BANGKOK 8260

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OREP (WOLFF, LESTER)

SUBJ: CONGRESSMAN WOLFF'S DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE IN BANGKOK,
APRIL 17

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING IS USIS TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS CONFERENCE
GIVEN BY CONGRESSMAN WOLFF UPON HIS DEPARTURE FROM BANGKOK,
APRIL 17. END SUMMARY.

BEGIN TRANSCRIPT:

Q. ABC NEWS. DID YOU MEET WITH ANY OF THE SHAN LEADERS OR
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KHUN SA IN CHIANG MAI YESTERDAY?

A. IN UNFORTUNATELY WAS ILL YESTERDAY, AND I HAD NO MEETINGS
YESTERDAY, NO MEETINGS.

Q. DID YOU GO TO CHIANG MAI, SIR?

A. NO, ID DID NOT.

Q. I'M AL DAWSON FROM UPI. YOU HAVE NOT, DURING YOUR STAY HERE SO FAR, ADDRESSED THE QUESTION OF MILITARY AID, WHICH WAS A SECONDARY...

A. RIGHT.

Q. ...SECOND REASON YOU WERE HERE. HAVE YOU FORMED ANY CONCLUSIONS OR ANY IDEAS ABOUT THE ROLE OF MILITARY AID IN THIS COUNTRY?

A. YES, I HAVE. I FEEL THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WE HAVE HAD, ACTUALLY PRIOR TO OUR COMING OUT HERE...WE CHECKED INTO THE NEEDS OF THAILAND, CONFIRMED WHAT NEEDS THERE WERE. AND WE'LL BE GOING BACK AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS ON THIS.

Q. CAN YOU GIVE US AN IDEA OF WHAT SORT OF RECOMMENDATIONS?

A. I CAN'T, BECAUSE THIS IS SOMETHING THAT WE WILL HAVE TO REALLY DISCUSS FURTHER WITH PEOPLE THAT WE HAVE HERE. WE DO SOMETHING, PERHAPS, THAT'S A LITTLE BIT UNUSUAL IN THAT WE DON'T HOLD TOO MANY MEETINGS WHILE WE ARE HERE TOGETHER IN THE DISCUSSIONS, NOT KNOWING HOW SECURE OUR DISCUSSIONS MAY BE. AND, THEREFORE, MOST OF THE DISCUSSIONS ARE HELD IN TRANSIT ON THE AIRPLANE. BUT I CAN TELL YOU THAT WE'VE EXAMINED VERY THOROUGHLY ALL ASPECTS OF THE SITUATION.

I'M IMPRESSED FROM WHAT I SEE AS AN OUTSIDER OF THE
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QUESTION OF THE STABILITY THAT I HAVE SEEN. I AM GREATLY IMPRESSED WITH THE FACT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS TAKEN A LEADERSHIP POSITION NOW ON THE NARCOTICS SITUATION. AND TO MY MIND, THIS IS A...CERTAINLY A RADICAL DEPARTURE FROM SOME OF THE LACK OF ATTENTION THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THIS IN THE PAST.

Q. CONGRESSMAN WOLFF...NEAL ULEVICH FROM AP HERE IN BANGKOK...THE TIMING OF THE EXECUTION OF THE NOTORIOUS DRUG TRAFFICKERS, SUMMARY EXECUTION, RAISED SOME EYEBROWS HERE, BECAUSE IT COINCIDED WITH THE CONFERENCE. I'M WONDERING IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THE EXECUTION?

A. I THINK THAT'S A MATTER PARTICULARLY FOR THE THAIS. I QUESTIONED THIS AND WAS GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WOULD HAVE OCCURRED SOONER, HAD THEY NOT TAKEN ADDITIONAL TIME TO ACTUALLY LOOK INTO THE SITUATION AND GIVE FURTHER EXAMINATION OF THE FACTS THAT SURROUNDED THIS PARTICULAR DEALER. I DID EXPRESS CONCERN AT THE TIME THAT THIS WAS

SOME WHAT OF A SHOWCASE. BUT FROM THE FACTS THAT I LEARNED, THIS WAS NOT THE CASE.

Q. WAYNE COREY FROM VOA...ON THE QUESTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THAILAND HAVE YOU DISCUSSED WITH ANYONE THE LIMITED U.S. FACILITIES AT TAKHLI AIR BASE AND THE QUESTION OF ANY OTHER FACILITIES WHICH MIGHT POSSIBLE BE AVAILABLE FOR THE UNITED STATES?

A. WE DID NOT DISCUSS SPECIFICS. WE'LL LEAVE THAT INTO THE HANDS OF THE MILITARY WHO ARE HERE, AND THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE LIAISON PEOPLE. WE ARE NOT HERE TO TRY TO ATTEMPT IN ANY MANNER, SHAPE OR FORM TO TAKE THE ROLE OF OUR AMBASSADOR, WHO IS DOING AN EXCELLENT JOB, NOT OUR MILITARY, WHO ARE MAINTAINING OUR MAAG MISSION HERE, WHO ARE MAINTAINING A CONTACT WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES. OUR SPECIFIC ACTIVITY WITH REFERENCE TO THE MILITARY
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ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IS THE FUNDING OF THE PROGRAM AND THE AMOUNTS THAT WE FEEL ARE NECESSARY IN THE WAY OF OUR MILITARY SALES OR OF GRANT MILITARY ASSISTANCE.

Q. (VOA) CAN YOU SAY ROUGHLY WHAT WOULD BE YOUR POSITION ON INCREASING IT, OR CHANGING EITHER THE AMOUNT OR THE NATURE OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THAILAND?

A. WELL, HERE AGAIN, I DON'T WANT TO IN ANY MANNER, SHAPE, OR FORM PREJUDGE THE SITUATION. I THINK THAT MUCH OF THIS DEPENDS UPON FUTURE ACTIONS IN THE INDOCHINA THEATER GENERALLY--THE QUESTION OF THE ROLE THAT VIET-NAM TAKES IN THE FUTURE.

YOU MAY HAVE READ THAT AT ONE OF THE OTHER POINTS, I SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES INVOLUNTARILY SUPPLIED THE MOST MASSIVE ASSISTANCE--MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY TO THE VIETNAMESE. ON THAT BASIS, I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER THAT WHAT THE VIETNAMESE ARE DOING WITH THIS MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AND WHAT THEIR PLANS ARE FOR THE FUTURE. WE ARE DISCUSSING IN THE CONGRESS TODAY THE QUESTION OF A RENEGOTIATION OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE VIETNAMESE. AND IF THERE IS NOT THE EXPORT OF THIS MILITARY EQUIPMENT OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTRY THAT WILL CREATE INTERNAL STRIFE IN VARIOUS AREAS OF THE WORLD, THEN WE WILL CERTAINLY LOOK AT THIS IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT THAN THAT IF THERE HAD BEEN THE INTRUSION OF THE VIETNAMESE INTO THEIR SURROUNDING AREAS. I MIGHT SAY ONE THING WHICH MIGHT BE IMPORTANT AT THIS POINT, I DISCUSSED THE QUESTIONS OF ASEAN WITH A NUMBER OF PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER. ONE ASPECT OF THIS

THAT I THINK IS IMPORTANT IS TO ESTABLISH SOME SORT OF A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE ASEAN GROUP GENERALLY. ON THIS SCORE, I HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT THERE BE AN EXCHANGE OF ASEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARIANS. IN THIS WAY, WE WOULD BE ABLE

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TO UNDERSTAND A LITTLE BIT MORE IN THE CONGRESS SOME OF THE AIMS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE HERE, AND ALSO TO, IN SOME FASHION, PERHAPS, ESTABLISH A CLOSER WORKING RELATIONSHIP...BY NO MEANS A DOMINATION. WE ARE RELUCTANT TO INJECT OURSELVES INTO THIS PICTURE, BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT THERE MAY BE A MISINTERPRETATION OF THE UNITED STATES' INTEREST. THE AMERICANS ARE FAIRLY GUN SHY TODAY, AS YOU KNOW, OF ATTEMPTING TO INTERFERE IN THE RELATIONSHIPS AND THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ANY OTHER NATIONS. HOWEVER, ON THIS SCORE, I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT ON A PARLIAMENTARY BASIS THAT THE UNITED STATES EXCHANGE PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS WITH THE ASEAN.

Q. (VOA) ON THIS QUESTION OF THE TALKS WITH THE VIETNAMESE, WHICH ARE COMING UP IN PARIS AND THE QUESTION OF ARMS, WOULD YOU TEND TO FAVOR, PERHAPS MAKING THE LACK OF EXPORT OF THESE ARMS A CONDITION FOR BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.?

A. OH, I THINK THAT DEFINITELY IS THE CASE, I MEAN, IT'S NOT JUST THE FACT OF THE LACK OF EXPORT. WE LEFT ABOUT 6.5 BILLION DOLLARS (6.5 THOUSAND MILLION DOLLARS) WORTH OF U.S. ARMS IN INDOCHINA. NOW THAT'S BOOTY OF WAR. WE'RE NOT GOING TO ASK FOR IT BACK. BUT BY THE SAME TOKEN, WE WOULD EXPECT IN THE EVENT THAT VIET-NAM WAS SINCERE IN ITS EFFORTS TO JOIN THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS, THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE USING THOSE ARMS IN AN AGGRESSIVE FASHION, OR TO UNDERMINE THE VARIOUS SURROUNDING COUNTRIES THAT EXIST IN THEIR VICINITY. NOW, I IMAGINE THERE ARE MANY OTHER ASPECTS OF WHAT WILL BE THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH A NORMALIZATION, IF YOU WANT TO CALL IT THAT, OF RELATIONS WILL OCCUR WITH VIET-NAM. BUT THIS OBVIOUSLY IS NOT ONLY A CONDITION, BUT BEFORE THERE COULD EVEN BE TALKS, THIS WOULD BE EXPECTED...THAT NONE OF THESE ARMS WOULD BE EXPORTED.

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THERE HAVE BEEN, FOR THE FIRST TIME, FOUND IN THE THAI-

MALAYSIA AREA, SOME SMALL QUANTITY OF AMERICAN ARMS THAT ARE PART OF THE ARMS THE U.S. LEFT OVER IN THE WAR. THIS IS OF GREAT CONCERN TO ME.

Q. CAN YOU SAY WHERE THAT WAS, MR. WOLFF?

A. I'M NOT SURE OF THE EXACT AREA. BUT IS WAS DOWN IN THE... TOWARD THE BORDER AREA.

Q. IS THIS A CONFIRMED REPORT, SIR? IS THIS, IS THIS, YOU BEEN...

A. THIS WAS A CONFIRMED REPORT.

Q. FROM...?

A. I'M SORRY?

Q. FROM?

A. FROM SOURCES THAT I HAVE OBTAINED HERE.

Q. WERE THESE WEAPONS TRACEABLE TO ANY SINGLE AREA WITHIN THE INDOCHINA WARE THEATER?

A. NO.

Q. WHAT SORT OF ARMS WERE THEY?

A. SMALL ARMS.

Q. (VOA) YOU'VE MENTIONED AT THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB THE OTHER DAY, POTENTIAL THREATS...

A. WHY DON'T YOU FELLOWS SIT DOWN? I HATE TO SEE YOU UNCLASSIFIED

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STANDING.

Q. YOU MENTIONED THE POTENTIAL THREAT TO INDONESIA.

A. YES.

Q. WERE YOU REFERRING TO THE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE CAPTURED AMERICAN ARMS REACHING INSURGENTS IN INDONESIA, OR POSSIBLY COULD BE SOME SORT OF VIETNAMESE MILITARY ADVENTURE? OR BOTH?

A. I DON'T THINK THAT THERE'S GOING TO BE..I DON'T FORECAST A VIETNAMESE FORAY INTO THIS AREA OF THE WORLD.

BUT THERE COULD POSSIBLY BE THE ARMING OF VARIOUS INSURGENT GROUPS AND THE LIKE THAT COULD POSSIBLY TAKE PLACE.

Q. AND YOU ALSO SAID AT THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB THAT THIS...YOU WOULD SUPPORT WITH SOME SORT OF AMERICAN, IF NOT INTERVENTION IN THIS CASE, WHEN AT LEAST SUPPORT FOR THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED, FACING A POTENTIAL THREAT.

A. (FIRST PART INAUDIBLE)... BUT ASSISTANCE IN THE FORM OF EQUIPMENT AND THE LIKE IN ORDER TO FORESTALL ANY ADVENTURISM UPON THE PART OF ANY NATION IN THE AREA. I THINK THAT WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR IS THE QUESTION OF STABILITY, AND STABILIZING THE AREA. ONE POINT THAT WAS MADE THE OTHER DAY, I THINK THAT WAS A VERY IMPORTANT ONE, WAS THE FACT THAT WE'RE NOT INTERESTED IN WINNING ANY WARS, BUT IN STABILIZING THE AREA TO MAINTAIN THE PEACE OF THE AREA.

Q. YESTERDAY, THE VOICE OF VIET-NAM, QUOTING YOUR REMARKS FROM JAKARTA, SUGGESTED THAT THIS WAS MERELY A DEVICE TO... OR MIGHT HAVE BEEN A DEVICE TO CREATE A CRISIS ISSUE, OR CRISIS SITUATION, WHEREBY THE UNITED STATES COULD JUSTIFY STEPPING IN. HAVE YOU SEEN THE REMARKS? HAVE YOU SEEN UNCLASSIFIED

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THE TRANSCRIPT?

A. I HAVEN'T SEEN THE REMARKS, BUT I SHOULD SAY THAT I'M RIGHT IN THE MIDST OF THE DETERMINATIONS OF WHETHER OR NOT WE SHOULD RENEGOTIATE OUR POSITION WITH VIET-NAM. IT WOULD BE FAIRLY INTEMPERATE UPON THEIR PART TO CONSIDER SUCH A SITUATION, SINCE WE'RE NOW DISCUSSING PEACE WITH THEM. WHY SHOULD WE BE USING THIS AS ANY DEVICE TO STIR PROBLEMS UP? IN FACT, I AM THE ONE WHO IS ATTEMPTING RIGHT NOW TO DEEK OUT THE FAMOUS KISSINGER LETTER THAT WAS SENT OUT AT THE TIME OF THE PARIS AGREEMENTS TO MAKE A DETERMINATION OF WHAT WAS DISCUSSED WITH THE VIETNAMESE RELATIVE TO THE QUESTION OF PAYMENTS OR SOME SORT OF REPARATIONS. ANY COMMENT BY THE VIETNAMESE...I TAKE IT, THAT THIS DOES NOT REFLECT THE GOVERNMENT COMMENT, EVEN THOUGH IT IS GOVERNMENT RADIO, PERHAPS. BUT I TAKE IT, IT DOES NOT REFLECT THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. I WOULD HOPE IT DOESN'T, BECAUSE I WOULD HOPE THAT THEY DO NOT MISINTERPRET WHAT I AM SAYING AS ANY ATTEMPT AT KINDLING THE FIRES THAT I HOPE HAVE GONE OUT.

Q. (UPI) THAT LETTER TO WHICH YOU REFER WHICH HAS BEEN IN PART RELEASED BY THE VIETNAMESE, INDICATED THAT KISSINGER WANTED TO GIVE VIET-NAM OR INDOCHINA 3.25 BILLION DOLLARS (3.25 THOUSAND MILLION DOLLARS) FOR RECONSTRUCTION.

CAN YOU SEE AT THIS POINT CONGRESS VOTING AID TO VIET-NAM AT ALL?

A. WELL, LET ME SAY ABOUT THE RECONSTRUCTION; WE DID LEAVE THERE, AND I'M GETTING RIGHT AT THE MOMENT, I'M ATTEMPTING TO FIND OUT WHAT WE LEFT THERE WITHOUT DESTROYING. WE HAD THE CAPABILITY OF DESTROYING MOST OF THE INSTALLATIONS THAT WE BUILT UP DURING THE WAR, AND I KNOW THAT OUR PEOPLE ARE CAPABLE OF DEMOLITION WORK IF THEY SO DESIRE. WE LEFT CAM RANH BAY INTACT. WE LEFT TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT INTACT. WE LEFT QUITE A FEW OTHER FACILITIES
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THAT ARE WORTH BILLIONS OF DOLLARS INTACT THERE. IT'S A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT, WHEN WE TALK OF THE QUESTION OF RECONSTRUCTION, OF WHAT WAS IN REALITY DESTROYED. WE HAD, IT MUST BE REMEMBERED, THAT AS PART OF THE DESTRUCTION IN VIET-NAM, WE SUFFERED VERY SEVERELY THERE. WHAT IS THE COST IN LIVES?

THE FACT STILL REMAINS THAT THERE ARE THE QUESTIONS OF THE...AND I'M NOT ATTEMPTING TO BE A COLD WARRIOR BY SAYING THAT THE MIA'S (AMERICANS MISSING IN ACTION) ARE STILL A QUESTION BETWEEN THE VIETNAMESE AND OURSELVES, THE CAMBODIANS AND OURSELVES. BUT THE FACT DOES REMAIN ON A PURELY HUMANITARIAN BASIS, THIS IS A SITUATION THAT REQUIRES RESOLUTION, AND NOT ON A PIECEMEAL BASIS.

Q. A SHORT ANSWER TO THE QUESTION IS "NO" AT THIS TIME?

A. I'D SAY THAT NOTHING IS WITHOUT POSSIBILITY.

Q. (VOA) CONGRESSMAN, IS IT ACCURATE TO SAY THAT YOU BELIEVE THAT AT LEAST ONE CONDITION FOR NORMALIZING RELATIONS SHOULD BE AT LEAST A GUARANTEE FROM THE VIETNAMESE THAT THEY WILL NOT EXPORT ARMS.

A. I THINK THAT THIS IS MANDATORY, THAT THAT BE A PRE-CONDITION TO ANY DISCUSSIONS EVEN, WITH..THE VIETNAMESE.

Q. EVEN ANY DISCUSSIONS?

A. THAT'S CORRECT.

Q. WOULD YOU SEE ANY OTHER CONDITIONS?

A. I'D SEE THE CONDITION OF THE MIA'S AS A PRECONDITION OF PEACE, VERY DEFINITELY, TO FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS. AND I THINK, MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, IN SETTING DOWN PRECON-
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DITIONS, I THINK THERE HAS TO BE THE GENERAL CLIMATE AND PREDISPOSITION UPON THE PART OF THE VIETNAMESE TO REALLY WANT PEACE IN THIS AREA. AND AN INDICATION OF IT WOULD BE THE FACT THAT THEY WOULD NOT START TROUBLE IN OTHER AREAS OF THIS...OTHER PARTS OF THIS WORLD...THIS AREA OF THE WORLD.

Q. (VOA) HOW DO YOU LOOK AT THE .SOUTHEAST ASIA NOW? YOU'VE BEEN TO SEVERAL COUNTRIES. THE DUST HAS SETTELED AFTER THE END OF THE VIET-NAM WAR. WHAT SORT OF PICTURE HAVE YOU GOTTEN SO FAR?

A. I SEE IT TENDING TO STABILIZE, WHICH I THINK IS MOST IMPORTANT. I'M NOT A NEWCOMER TO THIS AREA. I DON'T THINK IN THE TWO AND THREE DAYS TIME THAT I AM SPENDING IN EACH ONE OF THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED, THAT I CAN MAKE A VERY DEEP ASSESSMENT OTHER THAN FROM THE TALKS THAT I'VE HAD WITH VARIOUS OF THE LEADERS OF THE GOVERNMENTS AS WELL AS PEOPLE OUT OF GOVERNMENT. ON THIS BASIS, I DO SEE A GENERAL TREND TOWARDS STABILITY IN THE AREA. AND I THINK IT IS FOR ALL CONCERNED THAT THIS STABILITY BE MAINTAINED.

I MUST SAY ONE OTHER POINT. THERE HAS BEEN A VERY STRONG POINT RAISED BY OUR PRESIDENT RELATIVE TO THE QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. I THINK THIS MUST BE RESTATED OVER AND OVER. OUR OBJECTIVES IN THIS ARE NOT TO ATTEMPT TO FORCE ANY NATION OF THE WORLD TO ADOPT AMERICAN STANDARDS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT CERTAINLY, I THINK THAT AMERICA, AS A LEADER IN THE WORLD, HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO STATE AND RESTATE THE REGARD FOR HUMAN DIGNITY, FOR FREEDOM AND FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE. AND THIS IS WITHOUT A DOUBT ONE OF THE PRIME CONCERNS OF THE UNITED STATES. AND I'M HAPPY THAT OUR PRESIDENT HAS MADE THIS A CORNERSTONE OF AMERICAN POLICY.

Q. DID YOU STRESS THIS CONCERN TO THE THAI LEADERS YOU'VE MET, MR. WOLFF?

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A. I HAVE NOT ONLY STRESSED THIS CONCERN TO THE THAI LEADERS, I HAVE STRESSED IT TO THE KOREAN LEADERS, I'VE STRESSED TO THE INDONESIA LEADERS--EACH OF THE PEOPLE I HAVE SPOKEN TO, THAT OUR MISSION HAS SPOKEN TO. REMEMBER, I'M ONLY ONE OF A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO ARE OUT HERE AT THIS TIME.. BUT WE HAVE EXPRESSED THIS CONCERN AT

THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US HOW PRESIDENT PARK RESPONDED IN SEOUL?

A. YES. HE RESPONDED. I THINK IT WAS REPORTED IN SEOUL--EVEN MY STATEMENT WAS REPORTED IN SEOUL--WHICH IS KIND OF UNUSUAL. BUT THE FACT IS THAT HE DID INDICATE THAT THEY HAVE A CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY HAVE A PARTICULAR SITUATION THAT IS, PERHAPS, DIFFERENT FROM SOME OF THE OTHER NATIONS OF THE WORLD. THE CONDITIONS THERE, IT WAS EXPLAINED TO US, ARE ONE OF GREAT TENSION WITH LARGE ARMIES FACING EACH OTHER ACROSS, WITHIN A SHORT, WHAT IS SAID TO BE DEMILITARIZED ZONE, WHICH IS HARDLY A DEMILITARIZED ZONE. AND THE CAPITAL CITY OF THEIR COUNTRY JUST 25 MILES (40 KILOMETERS) FROM THAT SO-CALLED DEMILITARIZED ZONE. I NOT ONLY STRESSED TO PARK, BUT I THINK THAT PARK UNDERSTANDS OUR POSITION VERY CLEARLY. AND I'M HOPEFUL THAT THERE WILL BE GREAT....GREATER PROGRESS AND SUSTAINED PROGRESS IN THIS AREA, IN NOT ONLY KOREA, BUT OTHER AREAS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA.

Q. (VOA) THE UNITED STATES STILL HAS AN AGREEMENT WITH THAILAND, THE RUSK-THANAT KHOMAN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD ALLOW FOR AMERICAN FORCES TO DEFEND THAILAND UNDER SOME CIRCUMSTANCES. THERE IS A QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER THAT AGREEMENT IS STILL VALID. THE THAIS SAY IT IS. WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

A. ANY AGREEMENT THAT WE DO HAVE ON THAT SCORE NOW IS A UNCLASSIFIED

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RESULT OF THE WAR POWERS RESOLUTION THAT PASSED THE CONGRESS. BEFORE THE COMMITMENT OF AMERICAN TROOPS ANY PLACE IN THE WORLD, WOULD HAVE TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONGRESS. IF THE CONGRESS TOOK ACTION ON IT, ALL WELL AND GOOD. AND THE TROOPS COULD BE COMMITTED. BUT THE PRESIDENT CANNOT COMMIT TROOPS TO ANY PLACE IN THE WORLD WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF CONGRESS.

Q. IS IT CONCEIVABLE THAT CONGRESS, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, WOULD AUTHORIZE U.S. TROOPS TO COME IN HERE?

A. I DON'T KNOW. I MEAN THAT YOU'RE ASKING ME AN INCONCEIVABLE QUESTION. SO HOW CAN I CONCEIVE OF THE ANSWER?

Q. (VOA) DO YOU BELIEVE AS THE THAI INTERIOR MINISTER, THE VIETNAMESE WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE COME IN HERE? THE THAI INTERIOR MINISTER PREDICTED A VIETNAMESE INVASION ON FEBRUARY 15.

A. IS THAT RIGHT? WELL....

Q. OF COURSE, IT DIDN'T OCCUR.

A. WELL, I'M NOT GOING TO DIFFER...

Q. OF COURSE THIS IS EXTREMELY HYPOTHETICAL.

A. ...WITH THE THAI MINISTER, BUT I DON'T THINK THAT THE
VIETNAMESE ARE READY FOR EXTERIOR MOVEMENT.

Q. DO YOU THINK THE THAIS REALIZE THAT?

A. I THINK SO. I REALLY DO.

END TRANSCRIPT.

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